

## Abonmarche Group Walks the Abon-Mack Walk

### Initiative in Brief

Creative project management comes naturally to the Abonmarche Group. So when they formed their wellness committee; they included a marketing person, a business manager, an engineer and an administrative assistant. The committee intentionally chose an equal mix of males and females with ages ranging from 20 to 60 years old to ensure that the members of the committee were representative of Abonmarche's employee population. The committee developed an action plan for their wellness initiatives, and they received 100% support from the president!

The employee interest survey and health risk appraisal results showed that physical activity was a high need and interest for employees. The wellness committee responded by implementing a physical activity challenge. The *Abon-Mack Walk* was a virtual walk from Abonmarche in Benton Harbor to Mackinaw Island. A map was posted, and colored pins were used to represent the teams. An aerobic mileage chart was available to convert various types of physical activity into miles. There were seven teams with four participants on each team. Each team member walked an average of 25 miles per week. A combined total of 6,300 miles were logged over the nine-week session! Gift certificates were given to each participant, and first, second, third place prizes were awarded for the employees that logged the top number of miles.

The wellness committee is continuing to look for new ways to answer the interests and needs of the employees. Sue Grumbir, Administrative Assistant, said that the committee is researching workout facilities, and has a flu shot clinic planned. They're also planning a new challenge in January to start 2008 off on a healthy foot!

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### Benefits

Noted benefits of the program are:

- Multiple benefits achieved during the wellness activities. Several people lost weight during the *Abon-Mack Walk*; one person lost 14 pounds and logged about 40 miles per week!
- Team spirit was developed during the friendly competition.
- The teams were randomly selected for the challenge. People got to know one another. Some of them even went on walks together after work.

*"We've had great participation in our initiative from the employees and the president of Abonmarche. We are a self-insured company. The employees want to stay healthy to keep their premiums down."*

Sue Grumbir  
Administrative Assistant

### Lessons Learned

- Have a wellness team that is representative of the workforce to get a variety of ideas for all ages and genders.
- Make employees know that some wellness activities are subject to change.
- Keep your employees motivated so they keep moving after an organized activity is completed.

**Cost:** Seminars \$135 each, incentives, healthy lunches, flu shots, health screening about \$35 per person  
**Risk Factor:** Overweight, chronic disease, physical inactivity  
**Impact/Reach:** 75%  
**Business/Sector:** Design & Project Management/Service